

# COVID-19 U.S. Travel Sentiment Survey

Wave 28: January 12, 2021

Longwoods International, with the support of Miles Partnership, is undertaking a tracking survey of U.S. travelers' intentions. This summarizes four critical data points from our survey using a national sample of 1,000 adults from January 6, 2021.

[View the full report.](#)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 2021 TRAVEL INTENTIONS

As 2021 begins, about 50% of U.S. travelers are planning to visit family and friends on their first trip this year, with the vast majority planning to travel by car. About one-third of American travelers expect their first trip of the year to be a leisure/vacation trip. "The desire for travel to be with friends and family remains strong during the pandemic," said Amir Eylon, President and CEO of Longwoods International. "No doubt this is being fueled by the pandemic's negative impact on friends and families gathering since the arrival of COVID-19 last spring and particularly during the holidays."

### FACTORS IMPACTING TRAVEL

As cases have surged across the U.S. during the holidays, concerns around the coronavirus continue to be the main impediment to travel. This is impacting both the nature and timing of 2021 trips, with an uptick in the shift from air travel to road trips (almost one in three U.S. travelers are indicating this shift) and 41% of American travelers not planning to hit the road at all before there is vaccine distribution.

### PERCEPTION OF TRAVEL & SAFETY

A lot of work is still needed to rebuild travelers' confidence including their perception of safety within and outside their communities. 46% of U.S. travelers feel safe venturing outside of their local communities, up from 39% in November 2020. There was also smaller improvements in the percent of U.S. travelers feeling safe dining or shopping locally (47%) or in support of opening their community to travelers, now at 41%.

### TRAVEL CONTENT DURING THE PANDEMIC

This wave asked U.S. travelers about the types of travel content they were consuming during the crisis. As the impact of pandemic continues, there was an overall drop in the consumption of travel content. Online videos topped the responses in January 2021, up from 4th in May 2020, while traditional print magazines /visitor guides, TV shows and travel guide books filled out the other top four content types.

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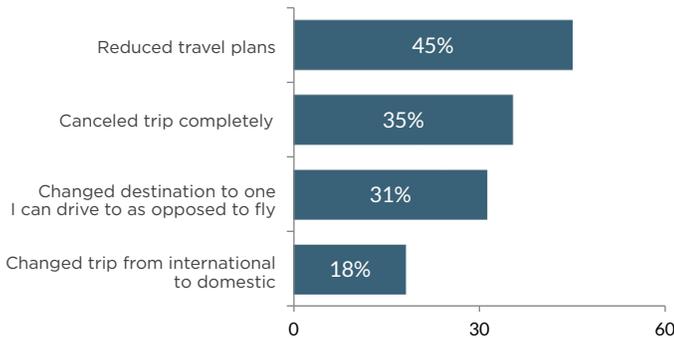
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## TRAVEL PLANS

Surging COVID-19 case numbers over the holiday period has continued to impact travel plans for 2021. Despite this, early January 2021 saw a small drop in the percent of U.S. travelers canceling their trips and a rise in those planning to switch trips involving flights to road travel. The first trip most U.S. travelers are planning in 2021 involves a road trip to see friends and family - especially shorter road trips of less than 200 miles.

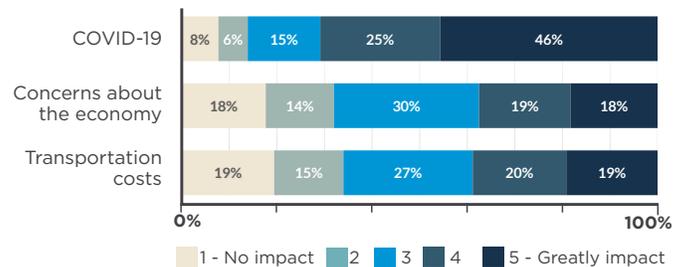
### HOW DID YOU CHANGE YOUR PLANS?



## FACTORS IMPACTING TRAVEL

Emphasizing again the nature of this health crisis, COVID-19 continues to be the main factor impacting people's decisions to travel in the next six months. 46% indicated that COVID-19 will "greatly impact" their travel plans, a similar level seen in 2020. Despite the recent rise in unemployment, still only a small percentage (18%) said that the economy would greatly impact their travel plans.

### FACTORS IMPACTING DECISIONS TO TRAVEL IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS



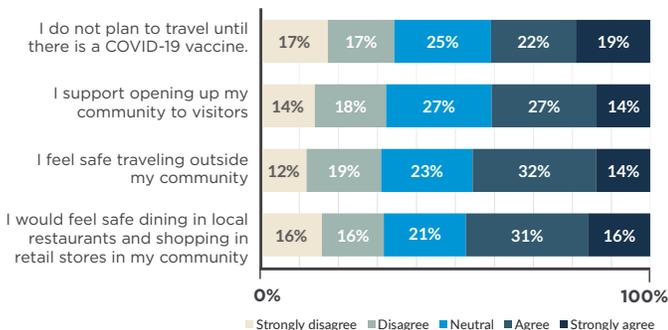
69%

of U.S. travelers indicate they will change their travel plans in the next six months due to COVID-19, continuing a decline since mid-November 2020. 63% of US travelers still have travel plans in the next six months.

## CONFIDENCE IN TRAVEL & TRAVELERS

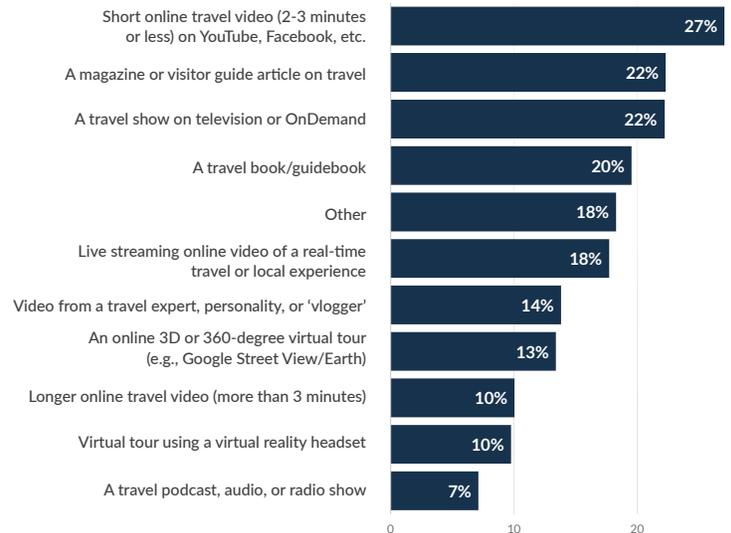
Despite the recent rise in COVID-19 cases, U.S. travelers' confidence saw slight improvements. Much more is needed as vaccinations gain traction. 47% of U.S. travelers now feel safe dining or shopping locally, 41% support opening their community to visitors and 46% feel safe traveling outside their community, all responses that are up from November/December 2020. However, 41% of American travelers are still not planning any travel until there is a vaccine available.

### PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY AND TRAVEL



## TRAVEL CONTENT IN THE PANDEMIC

This wave examined the types of travel content U.S. travelers were viewing in the last two months of the pandemic. As 2021 starts, short online videos surged to the top of the list with over one-quarter (27%) of respondents. Magazines and visitor guides, TV shows and travel guidebooks filled out the top four spots with a drop in the consumption of all types of travel content from May 2020 as the pandemic's impact on travel persists.



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